WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An information processing apparatus capable of transmitting electronic mail, comprising:

designating means for designating a desired object

5 to be attached to electronic mail;

acquisition means for acquiring access information relating to the object designated by said designating means; and

generating means for generating electronic mail

10 information which includes the access information acquired by said acquisition means.

2. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said generating means generates an attachment file which includes the access information acquired by said

15 acquisition means and attaches the generated attachment file to electronic mail that is to be transmitted.

3. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said generating means affixes the access information, which has been acquired by said acquisition means, to the main

20 body of electronic mail that is to be transmitted.

4. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the access information includes information indicating storage location of the object, which has been designated by said designating means, in a system.

25 5. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said designating means has display means for presenting an

at-a-glance display, in a thumbnail or list format, of documents that are present in a specific storage area, and for displaying an icon corresponding to an electronic mail application that is for generating and

5   transmitting electronic mail;

wherein a desired document among the documents in the at-a-glance display is dropped onto said icon, thereby designating the desired document.

6.   The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said

10   acquisition means has setting means for allowing a user to set access information via a prescribed user interface.

7.   The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said acquisition means sets an access key, which is for

15   enabling access to the object, as part of the access information.

8.   The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising setting means for setting, as part of the access information, permission to access all object

20   files in a storage area of an object that has been designated by said designating means.

9.   The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising setting means for setting, as part of the access information, permission to access other versions

25   of an object that has been designated by said designating means.

10. An information processing apparatus capable of receiving electronic mail, comprising:

extraction means for extracting access information contained in electronic mail that has been received;

5   access means for accessing an object based upon the access information extracted by said extraction means; and

display means for presenting a display that corresponds to the object based upon content of the
10   object accessed by said access means.

11. The apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said display means presents either a thumbnail display or a list display regarding objects accessed by said access means.

15   12. The apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the access information contains enabling information indicating whether it is permissible to access another object present at a storage location to which said object belongs;

20   said access means accesses another object present at said storage location in a case where the enabling information permits access to the other object; and

said display means presents an at-a-glance display relating to an object present at said storage location
25   based upon results of accessing performed by said access means.

13. The apparatus according to claim 12, further comprising:

selection means for selecting a desired object from the at-a-glance display; and

5 content display means for displaying content of an object that has been selected by said selection means.

14. The apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the access information contains enabling information indicating whether it is permissible to access another

10 version of said object;

said access means accesses an object which is another version of said object in a case where the enabling information permits access to the other version; and

15 said display means presents an at-a-glance display inclusive of the other version of said object based upon results of accessing performed by said access means.

15. The apparatus according to claim 14, further comprising:

20 selection means for selecting a desired object from the at-a-glance display; and

content display means for displaying content of an object that has been selected by said selection means.

16. The apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said

25 extraction means extracts the access information from a file that has been attached to electronic mail.

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17. The apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said extraction means extracts the access information from the main body of electronic mail.

18. The apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the access information includes position information for specifying a storage location at which said object is present, and an access key for obtaining privilege to access an object at said storage location; and

using the access key, said access means accesses said object at the storage location specified by the position information

19. The apparatus according to claim 18, wherein the access key is information for logging in to said storage location.

20. An information processing system in which electronic mail can be sent and received between information processing apparatus, comprising:

generating means for generating electronic mail information which includes access information relating to an object to be attached to electronic mail;

communication means for sending and receiving the electronic mail information generated by said generating means; and

access means for accessing the object based upon the access information contained in the electronic mail information received via said communication means.

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21. The system according to claim 20, wherein said generating means includes:

designating means for designating a desired object to be attached to electronic mail;

5   acquisition means for acquiring access information relating to the object designated by said designating means; and

mail information generating means for generating electronic mail information in which the access

10   information acquired by said acquisition means constitutes part of the electronic mail.

22.   The system according to claim 21, wherein said mail information generating means generates an attachment file which includes the access information acquired by

15   said acquisition means and attaches the generated attachment file to electronic mail that is to be transmitted.

23.   The system according to claim 21, wherein said mail information generating means affixes the access

20   information, which has been acquired by said acquisition means, to the main body of electronic mail that is to be transmitted.

24.   The system according to claim 21, wherein the access information includes information indicating

25   storage location of the object, which has been designated by said designating means, in the system.

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25. The system according to claim 21, wherein said designating means has display means for presenting an at-a-glance display, in a thumbnail or list format, of documents that are present in a specific storage area,
5   and for displaying an icon corresponding to an electronic mail application that is for generating and transmitting electronic mail;
        wherein a desired document among the documents in the at-a-glance display is dropped onto said icon,
10 thereby designating the desired document.
26. The system according to claim 21, wherein said acquisition means has setting means for allowing a user to set access information via a prescribed user interface.
15 27. The system according to claim 21, wherein said acquisition means sets an access key, which is for enabling access to the object, as part of the access information.
28. The system according to claim 21, further
20 comprising setting means for setting, as part of the access information, permission to access all object files in a storage area of an object that has been designated by said designating means.
29. The system according to claim 21, further
25 comprising setting means for setting, as part of the access information, permission to access other versions

of an object that has been designated by said designating means.

30. The system according to claim 20, wherein said communication means transmits the electronic mail information, which has been generated by said generating means, to an information processing apparatus that has been designated.

31. The system according to claim 20, wherein said access means includes:

  extraction means for extracting the access information contained in electronic mail that has been received;

  object access means for accessing an object based upon the access information extracted by said extraction means; and

  display means for presenting a display that corresponds to the object based upon content of the object accessed by said access means.

32. The system according to claim 31, wherein said display means presents either a thumbnail display or a list display regarding objects accessed by said access means.

33. The system according to claim 31, wherein the access information contains enabling information indicating whether it is permissible to access another object present at a storage location to which said

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object belongs;

said access means accesses another object present at said storage location in a case where the enabling information permits access to the other object; and

5   said display means presents an at-a-glance display relating to an object present at said storage location based upon results of accessing performed by said access means.

34.   The system according to claim 33, further

10   comprising:

selection means for selecting a desired object from the at-a-glance display; and

content display means for displaying content of an object that has been selected by said selection means.

15   35.   The system according to claim 31, wherein the access information contains enabling information indicating whether it is permissible to access another version of said object;

said access means accesses an object which is

20   another version of said object in a case where the enabling information permits access to the other version; and

said display means presents an at-a-glance display inclusive of the other version of said object based upon

25   results of accessing performed by said access means.

36.   The system according to claim 35, further

comprising:

selection means for selecting a desired object from the at-a-glance display; and

content display means for displaying content of an

5   object that has been selected by said selection means.

37.   The system according to claim 31, wherein said extraction means extracts the access information from a file that has been attached to electronic mail.

38.   The system according to claim 31, wherein said

10   extraction means extracts the access information from the main body of electronic mail.

39.   The system according to claim 31, wherein the access information includes position information for specifying a storage location at which said object is

15   present, and an access key for obtaining privilege to access an object at said storage location; and

using the access key, said object access means accesses said object at the storage location specified by the position information

20   40.   The system according to claim 39, wherein the access key is information for logging in to said storage location.

41.   An information processing method in an apparatus capable of transmitting electronic mail, said method

25   comprising:

a designating step of designating a desired object

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to be attached to electronic mail;

an acquisition step of acquiring access information relating to the object designated at said designating step; and

5   a generating step of generating electronic mail information which includes the access information acquired at said acquisition step.

42.   The method according to claim 41, wherein said generating step generates an attachment file which

10   includes the access information acquired at said acquisition step and attaches the generated attachment file to electronic mail that is to be transmitted.

43.   The method according to claim 41, wherein said generating step affixes the access information, which

15   has been acquired at said acquisition step, to the main body of electronic mail that is to be transmitted.

44.   The method according to claim 41, wherein the access information includes information indicating storage location of the object, which has been

20   designated at said designating step, in a system.

45.   The method according to claim 41, wherein said designating step includes a display step of presenting an at-a-glance display, in a thumbnail or list format, of documents that are present in a specific storage

25   area, and of displaying an icon corresponding to an electronic mail application that is for generating and

transmitting electronic mail;

wherein a desired document among the documents in the at-a-glance display is dropped onto said icon, thereby designating the desired document.

5 46. The method according to claim 41, wherein said acquisition step includes a setting step of allowing a user to set access information via a prescribed user interface.

47. The method according to claim 41, wherein said
10 acquisition step sets an access key, which is for enabling access to the object, as part of the access information.

48. The method according to claim 41, further comprising a setting step of setting, as part of the
15 access information, permission to access all object files in a storage area of an object that has been designated at said designating step. _

49. The method according to claim 41, further comprising a setting step of setting, as part of the
20 access information, permission to access other versions of an object that has been designated at said designating step.

50. An information processing method in an apparatus capable of receiving electronic mail, said method
25 comprising:

an extraction step of extracting access information

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contained in electronic mail that has been received;

an access step of accessing an object based upon the access information extracted at said extraction step; and

5   a display step of presenting a display that corresponds to the object based upon content of the object accessed at said access step.

51. The method according to claim 50, wherein said display step presents either a thumbnail display or a

10   list display regarding objects accessed at said access step.

52. The method according to claim 50, wherein the access information contains enabling information indicating whether it is permissible to access another

15   object present at a storage location to which said object belongs;

said access step accesses another object present at said storage location in a case where the enabling information permits access to the other object; and

20   said display step presents an at-a-glance display relating to an object present at said storage location based upon results of accessing performed at said access step.

53. The method according to claim 52, further

25   comprising:

a selection step of selecting a desired object from

the at-a-glance display; and

a content display step of displaying content of an object that has been selected at said selection step.

54. The method according to claim 50, wherein the

5 access information contains enabling information indicating whether it is permissible to access another version of said object;

said access step accesses an object which is another version of said object in a case where the

10 enabling information permits access to the other version; and

said display step presents an at-a-glance display inclusive of the other version of said object based upon results of accessing performed at said access step.

15 55. The method according to claim 54, further comprising:

a selection step of selecting a desired object from the at-a-glance display; and

a content display step of displaying content of an

20 object that has been selected at said selection step.

56. The method according to claim 50, wherein said extraction step extracts the access information from a file that has been attached to electronic mail.

57. The method according to claim 50, wherein said

25 extraction step extracts the access information from the main body of electronic mail.

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58. The method according to claim 50, wherein the access information includes position information for specifying a storage location at which said object is present, and an access key for obtaining privilege to
5 access an object at said storage location; and

using the access key, said access step accesses said object at the storage location specified by the position information

59. The method according to claim 58, wherein the
10 access key is information for logging in to said storage location.

60. A method of controlling an information processing system in which electronic mail can be sent and received between information processing apparatus, said method
15 comprising:

a generating step of generating electronic mail information which includes access information relating to an object to be attached to electronic mail;

a communication step of sending and receiving the
20 electronic mail information generated at said generating step; and

an access step of accessing the object based upon the access information contained in the electronic mail information received via said communication step.

25 61. The method according to claim 60, wherein said generating step includes:

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a designating step of designating a desired object to be attached to electronic mail;

an acquisition step of acquiring access information relating to the object designated at said designating

5   step; and

mail information generating step of generating electronic mail information in which the access information acquired at said acquisition step constitutes part of the electronic mail.

10   62.   The method according to claim 61, wherein said mail information generating step generates an attachment file which includes the access information acquired by said acquisition step and attaches the generated attachment file to electronic mail that is to be transmitted.

15   63.   The method according to claim 61, wherein said mail information generating step affixes the access information, which has been acquired at said acquisition step, to the main body of electronic mail that is to be transmitted.

20   64.   The method according to claim 61, wherein the access information includes information indicating storage location of the object, which has been designated at said designating step, in the system.

65.   The method according to claim 61, wherein said

25   designating step includes a display step of presenting an at-a-glance display, in a thumbnail or list format,

of documents that are present in a specific storage area, and of displaying an icon corresponding to an electronic mail application that is for generating and transmitting electronic mail;

5   wherein a desired document among the documents in the at-a-glance display is dropped onto said icon, thereby designating the desired document.

66. The method according to claim 61, wherein said acquisition step includes a setting step of allowing a
10   user to set access information via a prescribed user interface.

67. The method according to claim 61, wherein said acquisition step sets an access key, which is for enabling access to the object, as part of the access
15   information.

68. The method according to claim 61, further comprising a setting step of setting, as part of the access information, permission to access all object files in a storage area of an object that has been
20   designated at said designating step.

69. The method according to claim 61, further comprising a setting step of setting, as part of the access information, permission to access other versions of an object that has been designated at said
25   designating step.

70. The method according to claim 60, wherein said

communication step transmits the electronic mail
information, which has been generated at said generating
step, to an information processing apparatus that has
been designated.

5   71.   The method according to claim 60, wherein said
access step includes:

an extraction step of extracting the access
information contained in electronic mail that has been
received;

10   an object access step of accessing an object based
upon the access information extracted at said extraction
step; and

a display step of presenting a display that
corresponds to the object based upon content of the
15   object accessed at said access step.

72.   The method according to claim 71, wherein said
display step presents either a thumbnail display or a
list display regarding objects accessed at said access
step.

20   73.   The method according to claim 71, wherein the
access information contains enabling information
indicating whether it is permissible to access another
object present at a storage location to which said
object belongs;

25   said access step accesses another object present at
said storage location in a case where the enabling

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information permits access to the other object; and

said display step presents an at-a-glance display relating to an object present at said storage location based upon results of accessing performed at said access

5   step.

74.   The method according to claim 73, further comprising:

a selection step of selecting a desired object from the at-a-glance display; and

10   a content display step of displaying content of an object that has been selected at said selection step.

75.   The method according to claim 71, wherein the access information contains enabling information indicating whether it is permissible to access another

15   version of said object;

said access step accesses an object which is another version of said object in a case where the enabling information permits access to the other version; and

20   said display step presents an at-a-glance display inclusive of the other version of said object based upon results of accessing performed at said access step.

76.   The method according to claim 75, further comprising:

25   a selection step of selecting a desired object from the at-a-glance display; and

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a content display step of displaying content of an object that has been selected at said selection step.

77. The method according to claim 71, wherein said extraction step extracts the access information from a

5 file that has been attached to electronic mail.

78. The method according to claim 71, wherein said extraction step extracts the access information from the main body of electronic mail.

79. The method according to claim 71, wherein the

10 access information includes position information for specifying a storage location at which said object is present, and an access key for obtaining privilege to access an object at said storage location; and

using the access key, said object access step

15 accesses said object at the storage location specified by the position information

80. The method according to claim 79, wherein the access key is information for logging in to said storage location.

20 81. The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising setting means for setting whether or not to provide the access information to an unregistered user who has not registered as a user, as a part of said access information.

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82. The apparatus according to claim 81, further

comprising means for giving password to the unregistered

user when it is set by said setting means that the

unregistered user may be provided with the access

5   information.

83.   The apparatus according claim 81, further

comprising means for prohibiting the unregistered user

from accessing the object when it is set by said setting

means that the unregistered user is not provided with

10   the access information.

84.   The system according to claim 21, further

comprising setting means for setting whether or not to

provide the access information to an unregistered user

who has not registered as a user, as a part of said

15   access information.

85.   The system according to claim 84, further

comprising means for giving password to the unregistered

user when it is set by said setting means that the

unregistered user may be provided with the access

20   information.

86.   The system according claim 84, further comprising

means for prohibiting the unregistered user from

accessing the object when it is set by said setting

means that the unregistered user is not provided with

the access information.

87.   The method according to claim 41, further

5   comprising a setting step of setting whether or not to

provide the access information to an unregistered user

who has not registered as a user, as a part of said

access information.

88.   The method according to claim 87, further

10   comprising a step of giving password to the unregistered

user when it is set in the setting step that the

unregistered user may be provided with the access

information.

89.   The method according claim 87, further comprising a

15   step of prohibiting the unregistered user from accessing

the object when it is set by said setting means that the

unregistered user is not provided with the access

information.

90.   The method according to claim 61, further

20   comprising a setting step of setting whether or not to

provide the access information to an unregistered user

who has not registered as a user, as a part of said

access information.

91. The method according to claim 90, further comprising a step of giving password to the unregistered user when it is set in the setting step that the unregistered user may be provided with the access information.

92. The method according claim 90, further comprising a step of prohibiting the unregistered user from accessing the object when it is set by said setting means that the unregistered user is not provided with the access information.

93. A computer-readable memory storing a control program for causing a computer to generate electronic mail, said control program having:

    code of a designating step of designating a desired object to be attached to electronic mail;

    code of an acquisition step of acquiring access information relating to the object designated at said designating step; and

    code of a generating step of generating electronic mail information which includes the access information acquired at said acquisition step.

94. A computer-readable memory storing a control program for causing a computer to process received mail,

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said control program having:

  code of an extraction step of extracting access
information contained in electronic mail that has been
received;

5 code of an access step of accessing an object based
upon the access information extracted at said extraction
step; and

  code of a display step of presenting a display that
corresponds to the object based upon content of the
10 object accessed at said access step.